



2013

Selected Poems: Twin; Prolonging/Palaung-ing it

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Recommended Citation

Phonvongsa, Somphet (2013) "Selected Poems: Twin; Prolonging/Palaung-ing it," *Journal of Southeast Asian American Education and Advancement*. Vol. 8 : Iss. 1 , Article 17.

DOI: 10.7771/2153-8999.1072

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Volume 8 (2013)

Journal of Southeast Asian American Education & Advancement

www.JSAAEA.org

A peer-reviewed
scholarly journal
published by the
National Association
for the Education &
Advancement of
Cambodian, Laotian,
and Vietnamese
Americans (NAFEA)

Selected Poems

by
Somphet Phonvongsa

Twin

(Dedicated to Somphet Pheaboonma)

She is cool not nga:r (cold)
Because her heart is warm not si jeun'nga:r (green)
Moi (1), ba:r (2) like twin
She is my kin
Fly like a sim (bird) or is it a kreuang bin (airplane)?
I like how she dten (dance), how she din (stand)
Natural like the trees, natural like the wind
In her element, her poetry is relevant
Spiritual, she is heaven sent
One with the cosmos, she la:r (spread) her soul
Healthy in spirit and mind
I'm glad her 32's stayed to keep her fine
My Sonoma, she is the heart of wine (country)
Flow, flow she keeps me bai:n (drunk)
But I'm going to check myself, keep myself in line
I just want to tell her she is cool like the Hindu Kush
Fly like the effects of northern lights and kush
The peace, the light, the opposite of Bush
And because she had time to come to the Bush
I will push, push my tush all the way to the "Rose"
And finally show off my flows



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Journal of Southeast Asian American Education & Advancement, Vol. 8 (2013)

Prolonging/Palaung-ing it

(Dedicated to Somphet Pheaboonma)

She says she knows how we linguist be
So I tell her that I like to be free, like to free
My soul with that thing that is heat (dance)
But I dance with stars so they can guide my 32's and my heart
Because a part of me is feeling that if I ever went home
They would've told me that I don't belong here
But that's me feeling paranoid, a cultural void
I'm still looking for that poise, that sense of peace
They call me dek noi so I guess I'm making that dek noise
I want to make a difference in my society
But my poetry is dead like Latin, living only on these sheets
Do I really need beats to say "Can I live?"
I want to be like her, feel a sense of belonging
My other half who is also half Khmu
Is more Lua but she's down with the goong (village)
So she's unlike me, I need to pursue the bpasoom (the meeting)
The bpoooh soong (my village)
Because the more and more I drift off, I become Thai or Loom
And that's problematic for me because half my life I've been rocking fruit of the "loom"
It's not to say no hope, all doom
If I consume a bit of their culture
But it's more of a wonder if I can uplift mine's
And balance it all without going under
I don't want to keep sounding overzealous but I just want to prolong it
Like her bond with Palaungic
Because this is what I belong with
Where I derived from, what I drive, strive for
Probably die for but I won't kill like the Sudanese in Darfur
This is where dancing with the astrology got me
And what an odyssey

About the Author



Somphet Phonvongsa was born on August 7th of 1987 in San Pablo, California to Say and Pinhkeo Phonvongsa. He is a first generation Khmu/Tai Lue American, a child of five, a son of refugees, a blogger, a poet and a blue-collar worker. His dreams are to recapture the spirits of the old world and to showcase it to the new world.



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